DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 139 162 EC 100 737

AUTHOR Hill, Elizabeth B.; And Others
TITLE Building Cooperation Between Resource and Elementary Classroom Teachers in Modifying Independent Work Habits.
PUB DATE Apr 77
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Convention, The Council for Exceptional Children (55th, Atlanta, Georgia, April 11-15, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Change; *Contingency Management; Elementary Education; Exceptional Child Research; *Intervention; Learning Disabilities; Parent Participation; *Reading Difficulty; Resource Teachers; *Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Investigated with four children in grade 4 were the effects of teacher praise notes and parental support on Ss' reading achievement and on the relationship between the regular class teacher and the special education consultant or resource teacher. Results indicated that academic performance can be improved through the use of consistent teacher-written praise. The contribution of parental involvement toward improved performance was also demonstrated. Additionally, the ability of this type of program to build relationships and change attitudes of regular classroom teachers and administrators toward supportive intervention and behavior management programs was informally demonstrated. (IM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED139162

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Session #83
Brampton B
Omni

BUILDING COOPERATION BETWEEN RESOURCE AND ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN MODIFYING INDEPENDENT WORK HABITS

Elizabeth B. Hill, M.A.

Steve C. Imber, Ph.D.

Barbara Waterman, M.A.

Paper Presented at Council of Exceptional Children
55th Annual International Convention: Atlanta, Georgia

April, 1977

EC100737

BUILDING COOPERATION BETWEEN RESOURCE AND ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN MODIFYING INDEPENDENT WORK HABITS

One of the most significant problems effecting both regular and special educators today is the concern for placement of children in the least restrictive educational environments. This concern has manifested itself in two major program changes. Although these program changes assume different formats and titles in different states, the concepts remain constant. These are:

1. The regular elementary classroom has opened its doors to children with learning and/or behavioral needs that were previously relegated to a self-contained special class or an intensive out-of-the-classroom resource program;
2. Many regular and special education administrators are looking for or experimenting with different methods of providing supportive programming for the regular classroom teachers that now have to cope with wide differences within their classrooms.

Thus, the regular classroom teacher has received a great deal of attention in recent literature (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1976; Mann, 1974; Reynolds & Davis, 1971; Brekke, 1975). Several textbooks have been recently written to help regular teachers work with exceptional children (Gearheart & Weishahn, 1976; Hammill & Bartel, 1975; Kozloff, 1974; Wallace & Kauffman, 1973; Brillinger, 1974;Christoplos; 1973). Several studies have been done that begin to demonstrate success in teaching the special needs child in a regular classroom, (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1976; Haring & Krug, 1975; Hewett, 1971). There has also been research which shows that teachers and administrators are concerned about the problems and difficulties that arise when mainstream-

ing occurs (Agard, 1974; Cormany, 1970; Glass & Meckler, 1972; Nyquist, 1974; Glockner, 1973; Grosenick, 1970; Leckie, 1973).

There have been several models proposed and tried recently, that would provide support for the regular classroom teacher. The diagnostic prescriptive teacher model (Prouty, 1970; Ysseldyke & Salvia, 1974) outlines a plan in which a child's strengths and weaknesses are assessed and a program of either remediation of the weakness (Bannatyne, 1968; Frostig, 1967; Johnson & Myklebust, 1967) or remediation of acadmeic skills (Bijou, 1970; Cohen, 1969; Mann, 1971) is implemented. In the consultant teacher model (Christie, McKenzie & Burdett, 1972) all academic subjects are broken down into minimal behavioral objectives and a child's progress towards meeting these objectives is closely monitored. Any discrepancy is alleviated by the intervention of the consultant, who works with the regular classroom teacher to formulate a plan of dealing with the discrepancy. Tharp & Wetzel (1969) have proposed a model that makes use of parents and other non-school personnel, to act as reinforcing agents in a program designed by a consultant and the regular classroom teacher. There have been other studies that advocate the use of parents as support personnel in their child's program (Alexander & Clements, 1975; Flint & Deloach, 1975).

One approach widely used in the home and the classroom to help modify academic problems is behavioral modification (Nelson, 1974; Masden, Becker and Thomas, 1968; Hacket, 1975)

Imber, Imber and Rothstein (1977) utilized such ideas together to formulate a simple, easy to administer program. The study

involved teacher administered praise notes used as a reinforcer for independent seat work behaviors of regular elementary children with learning and behavioral problems. It was aimed at helping the regular classroom teacher modify the academic achievement of her pupils. Each child received a teacher written praise note if 80% of his work was correctly completed. After 10 days of this procedure, each child's parent was contacted and asked to respond in a very positive way to these notes when the child came home. Multiple baseline data on the three phases (baseline, interventions 1 and 2) demonstrated that the percentage of work correctly completed increased when the notes were given and increased further when the parents added their support.

It is the purpose of this study to replicate the Imber study with four suburban 4th grade children. It is hoped that this investigation will provide support to the idea that a regular classroom teacher and a consultant can work together to plan and execute a simple, but effective program that can remediate behavior and learning problems.

Method

Subjects

Four 4th grade children in a suburban New England school participated in this study. They were in the same reading group and were all identified as having difficulty completing their reading seat work. The appropriateness of each child's assigned work has been carefully assessed and was shown to be suitable in each case.

S_1, a male, was identified by his teachers as an underachiever. Tests showed that he had average to above average intelligence but he was functioning almost 1 year below grade level in most areas. He would spend whole periods doing no work at all and was frequently out of his seat and out of the room. He was often disruptive and occasionally physically agressive.

S_2, a male, was described by his teachers as "lazy". Tests showed average or slightly below average intelligence but he was functioning 1 year or more below grade level in most areas. Although he often had behavior problems on the playground or in other outside activities, in the classroom he was generally cooperative. However, he was usually off task, staring out of the window, or into space.

S_3, a female, was being seen regularly by the learning disabilities resource teacher. Both teachers described her as lacking self confidence and having poor powers of concentration. Her language skills were also slightly depressed. She worked very quickly without paying a great deal of attention to what she was doing, often guessing.

S_4, a female, was described by her teachers as "slow". She seemed to try hard but never got much done. She had a short attention

span and was easily distracted. She was often at the pencil sharpener and water fountain.

All four children were viewed as being capable of doing more of their assigned tasks with greater accuracy.

Treatment Conditions

There was a 45 minute reading period every day, during which time each child was expected to complete several independent seat work tasks. Each task was divided into items for the purpose of data collection. The assignments consisted of answering comprehension questions, solving riddles and puzzles, and specific skill review exercises. The teacher was given a data collection sheet which enabled her to easily compute the percentage of correctly completed items. All work was corrected and returned on the day it was assigned.

The study consisted of 3 treatment phases. To determine the effects of the study on the attitudes of the personnel involved, informal attitude rating scales were administered to the regular classroom teacher, the consultant, and the child. Administrative attitudes were indirectly determined. This was done before phase 1 began. Phase 1 was the baseline period during which the percentage of correctly completed seat work was computed and recorded on the data sheets. Phase 2 involved the implementation of intervention 1. This procedure began with an individual teacher-child interview. At this time the teacher noted the child's appropriate behavior, discussed the problem of unfinished seat work and explained that the child would receive a note from the teacher on days that most of the seat work was correctly completed. The children were required

to accurately complete a minimum of 80% of their seat work in order to earn such a note. Phase 3 and the implementation of the second intervention began 10 days later and involved teacher-parent contact by phone and in writing. The praise note program was explained and any improvements that had already occurred were discussed along with the hope that parental support could increase these improvements. Parental cooperation was requested and a 4 step procedure was outlined:

1. If the child brings home a note, praise him as soon as possible.
2. Praise the child again in front of other family members.
3. Hang the note in a highly noticeable place.
4. The following morning, mention your hope that the child might repeat his success.

If the child did not earn a note on a given day, his parents were instructed to state that it was too bad that the child was unsuccessful, but 'tomorrow was another day'. No punishment was to be administered. As may be noted in Table I, the baseline and intervention periods varied for the three subjects. Consequently, this procedure served to control spurious environmental factors.

RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes the percentage of correctly completed items for the four subjects during each of the treatment phases.

(insert table 1)

Subject 1

S_1 has 11 days of the baseline period during which she completed 26% of her assigned tasks. The range during this period was from a low of 8% to a high of 46%. The average increased to 74% during the intervention 1 period and she was able to earn 5 notes. The range was from 66% to 85%. During the 20 days of intervention 2, S_1's average work correctly completed increased to 84% and she earned 17 notes. The range for this period was 72% to 94%.

Subject 2

S_2 had a baseline period of 16 days during which he correctly completed an average of 47% of his assigned tasks. The range was 37% to 70%. During intervention 1 his average increased to 82%, the range was 72% to 100% and he earned 7 notes. During the 15 days of intervention 2, the average increased to 94%. The range was from 80% to 100% and he earned 13 notes.

Subject 3

S_3 had 21 days of baseline. During this period she was able to correctly complete an average of 31% of her assigned tasks. The range was from 16% to 50%. During intervention 1 the average increased to 73% and she was able to earn 4 praise notes. Her range was from 40% to 88%. During intervention 2, (10 days) she was able to earn 7 praise notes. The average increased to 81% and the range

TABLE I

Mean Percentage of Correctly Completed Items of Independent Reading Seatwork and Number of Praise Notes Earned During Conditions of Baseline, Intervention 1 and Intervention 2

SUBJECT	BASE LINE		INTERVENTION 1			INTERVENTION 2		
	No. of Days	% Items	No. of Days	%items	No. of Notes	No. of Days	%items	# Notes
S 1	11	26%	10	74%	5	20	84%	17
S 2	16	47%	10	82%	7	15	94%	13
S 3	21	31%	10	73%	4	10	81%	7
S 4	11	16%	10	66%	4	20	81%	15

was from 66% to 90%. Also during this period (day 6) the level of the tasks was changed. (see discussion section).

Subject 4

S_4 had an eleven day baseline period (following the same schedule as S_1). During this period he was able to correctly complete 16% of his assigned tasks. The range was from 0% to 25%. During intervention 1 his average increased to 66% and he earned 4 praise notes. The range was from 33% to 86%. During the 20 days of intervention 2 his average increased to 81%. He earned 15 praise notes and the range was from 75% to 88%.

Multiple Comparisons

Figures 1, 2, and 3 provide a graphic comparison of the data for each of the subjects during the 3 treatment phases. It can be seen that each of the subjects showed significant improvement during each intervention. It can also be seen that each subject improved in such a way that during each successive stage of treatment, very few scores, if any, fall below the previous averages. An important purpose in using the multiple baseline procedure is to allow for a comparison of subjects who are experiencing various treatment phases. It can be seen that while S_1 and S_4 began to improve during their intervention 1 phase, S_2 and S_3 maintained their low baseline level of performance. Through such a comparison it is possible to increase the likelihood that the teacher praise and parental support had the desired effect of increasing the children's performance rather than the change being caused by some other variables that may have occurred during the project period. The teacher continued to provide notes to the children on an intermittent basis after the

project period was over and the children all continued to perform at their new levels.

In addition to the increased academic performance achieved by the students, there were changes in the attitudes of many of the personnel involved in the project. Although these attitude changes were measured informally they seem worth noting. The largest degree of attitude change occurred for the consultant. On a rating scale prepared before the project the consultant rated, on a 1-5 scale, 7 items relating to her attitudes about her potential to effect changes within a regular classroom that would result in the resolution of behavior or learning problems. A score of 1 indicated very little potential and 5 a great deal of potential. Before the project, on the 7 items the total score was 8. After the project the score was 26. Although the attitudes of the teacher and administrators were indirectly determined, it was discovered that they also had increased positive attitudes toward involving parents, behavior management programs and the efficacy of a very simple technique to change behaviors.

Discussion

This study was designed to replicate the findings of Imber, Imber and Rothstein (1977) which investigated the possibility of teacher written praise notes with parental support, producing a marked effect on academic performance. It was also designed to examine the effects of such a project on the relationship between the regular class teacher and the special education consultant or resource teacher. The results of both this study and the Imber

study strongly support the idea that academic performance can be improved through the use of consistent teacher written praise. The ability of parental involvement to make a contribution to improved performance has also been demonstrated. In addition, this study also demonstrates (informally) how this type of program can help to build relationships and change attitudes of regular classroom teachers and administrators toward supportive intervention and behavior management programs.

The multiple baseline technique and the similarity of this data with that of the original study and other replications, strengthens the findings. There are certain limitations however that should be considered. The success of the project would have been greatly diminished if each subject had not been assigned appropriate seat work. This factor assured that the reward was potentially attainable for each child. An example of the importance of this factor can be noted in the case of subject #3. A close examination of the raw data during intervention 1 revealed that even though this child had received only 4 (out of 10) praise notes, she had completed 80% of the work, or more almost every day (8 out of 10). Thus, the praise note seemed to be acting as a motivator, but she had completed so many of the items incorrectly that she was unable to earn more than 4 praise notes. At this point the teacher and the consultant re-examined the assignments for this child and made some changes in the type and level of the work. As was expected, the number of praise notes she was able to earn increased greatly. Because this occurred after intervention 2 had already begun (see graph) it was felt that this change in the level of the work and the

parental support were both demonstrated to have had an effect on her performance. As with the original study, both the relationship between the teacher and each child, as well as each parent's level of support, were unmeasurable variables. If the relationship between child and teacher is not favorable, the teacher may have to utilize free time or a material reinforcer paired with the praise notes to achieve the desired effect. If parental cooperation proves lacking, the teacher may have to redefine the objectives, goals and procedures for them or find another person to serve as a back-up reinforcer.

As with the original study, there are some implications here which merit attention. Mainly, this study reinforces the idea that a very simple procedure can be utilized by regular classroom teachers to produce significant changes in academic performance. There is also evidence here that parental support can be effective even without elaborate training procedures.

This study also raises questions that might be pursued through further research. It brings attention to the question of more extensive parental involvement in school programs as well as the use of behavior modification procedures in the home. It also raises the question of what other behavioral or emotional problems might be handled in the regular classroom with supportive intervention.

FIGURE 1-- Multiple Baseline Comparison of the effects of teacher adminiistered praise notes on independent reading seatwork

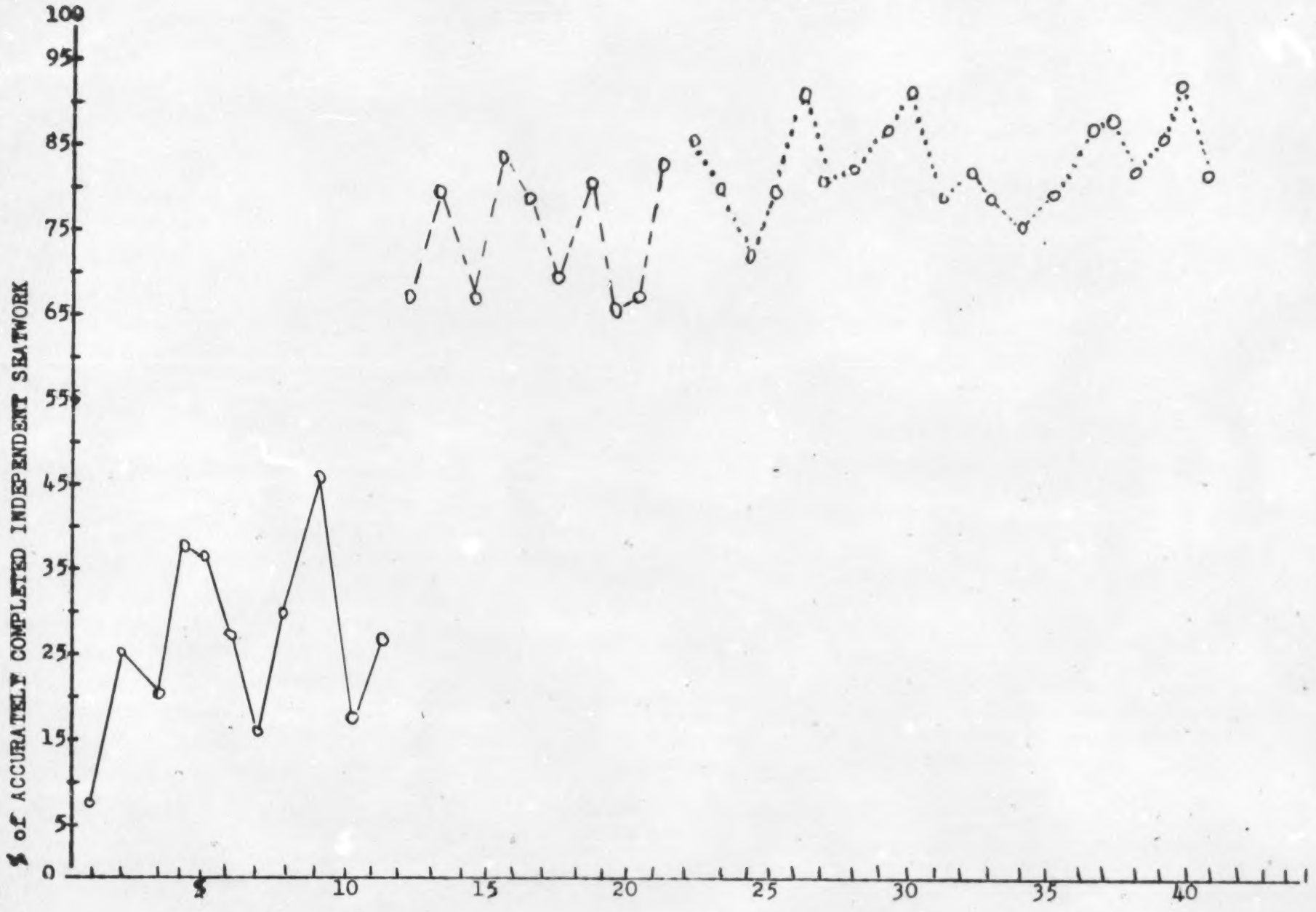


FIGURE 2-- Multiple Baseline Comparison of the effects of teacher administered praise notes on independent reading seatwork

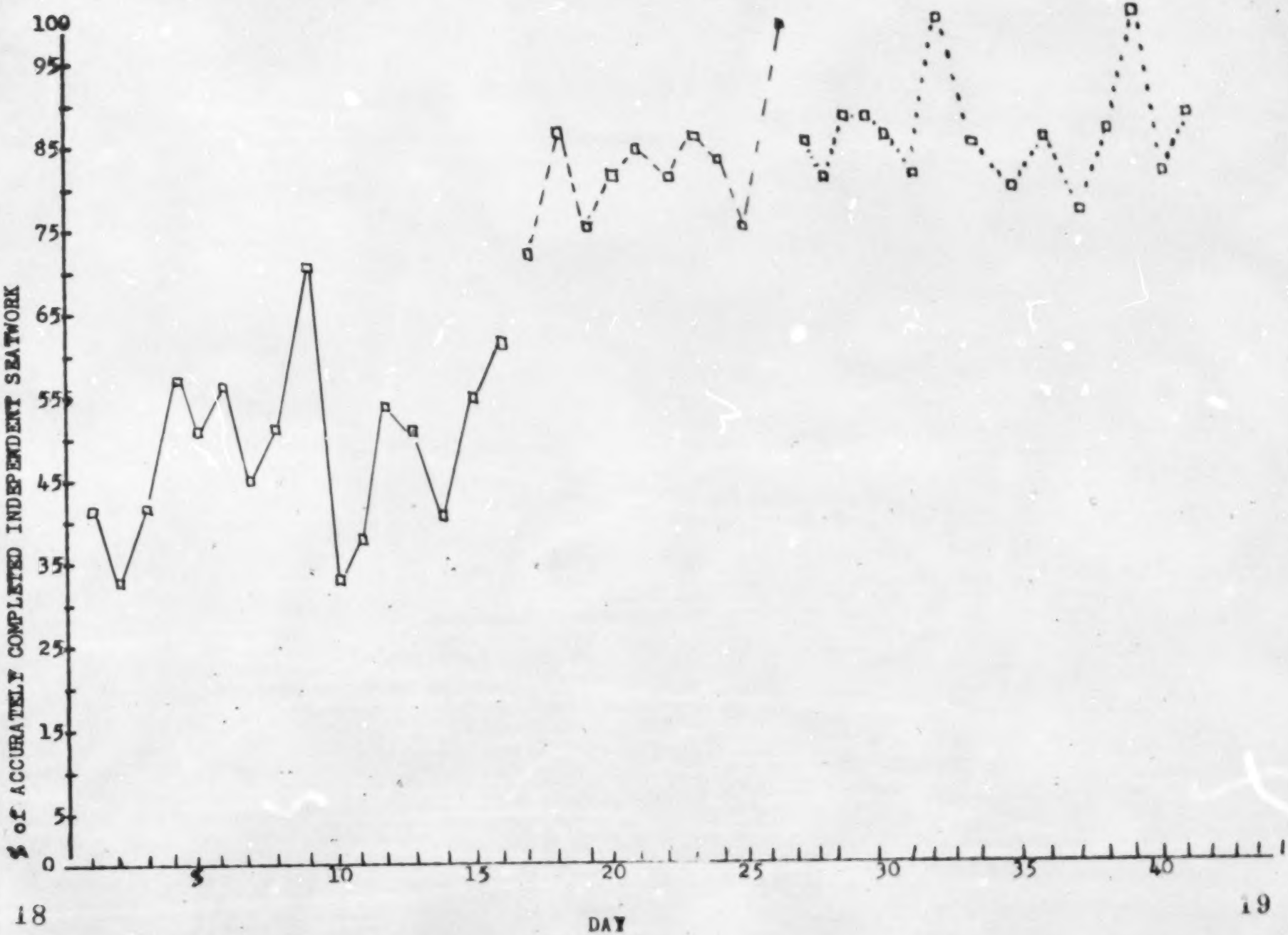


FIGURE 3-- Multiple Baseline Comparison of the effects of teacher adminimistured praise notes on independent reading seatwork

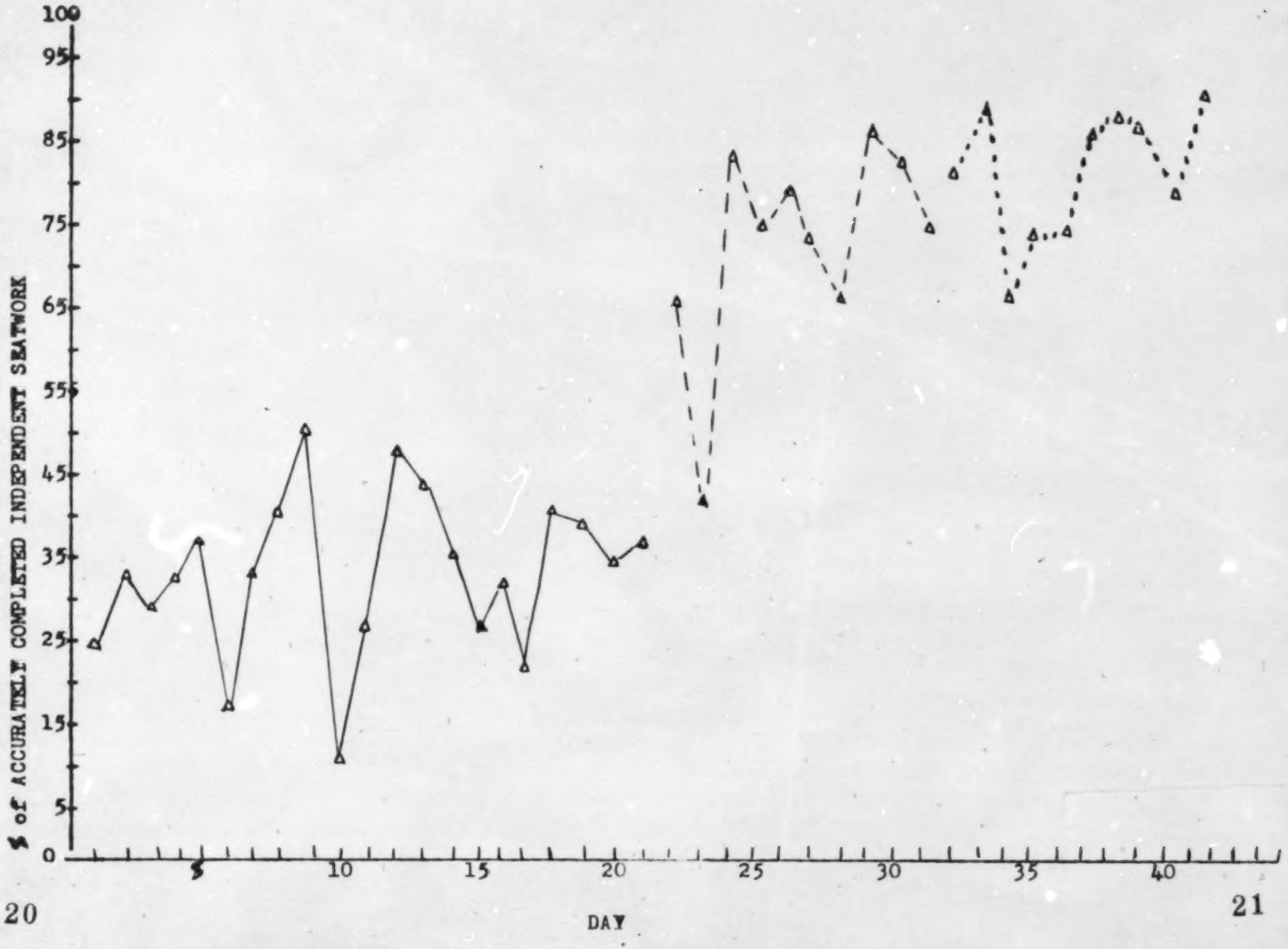
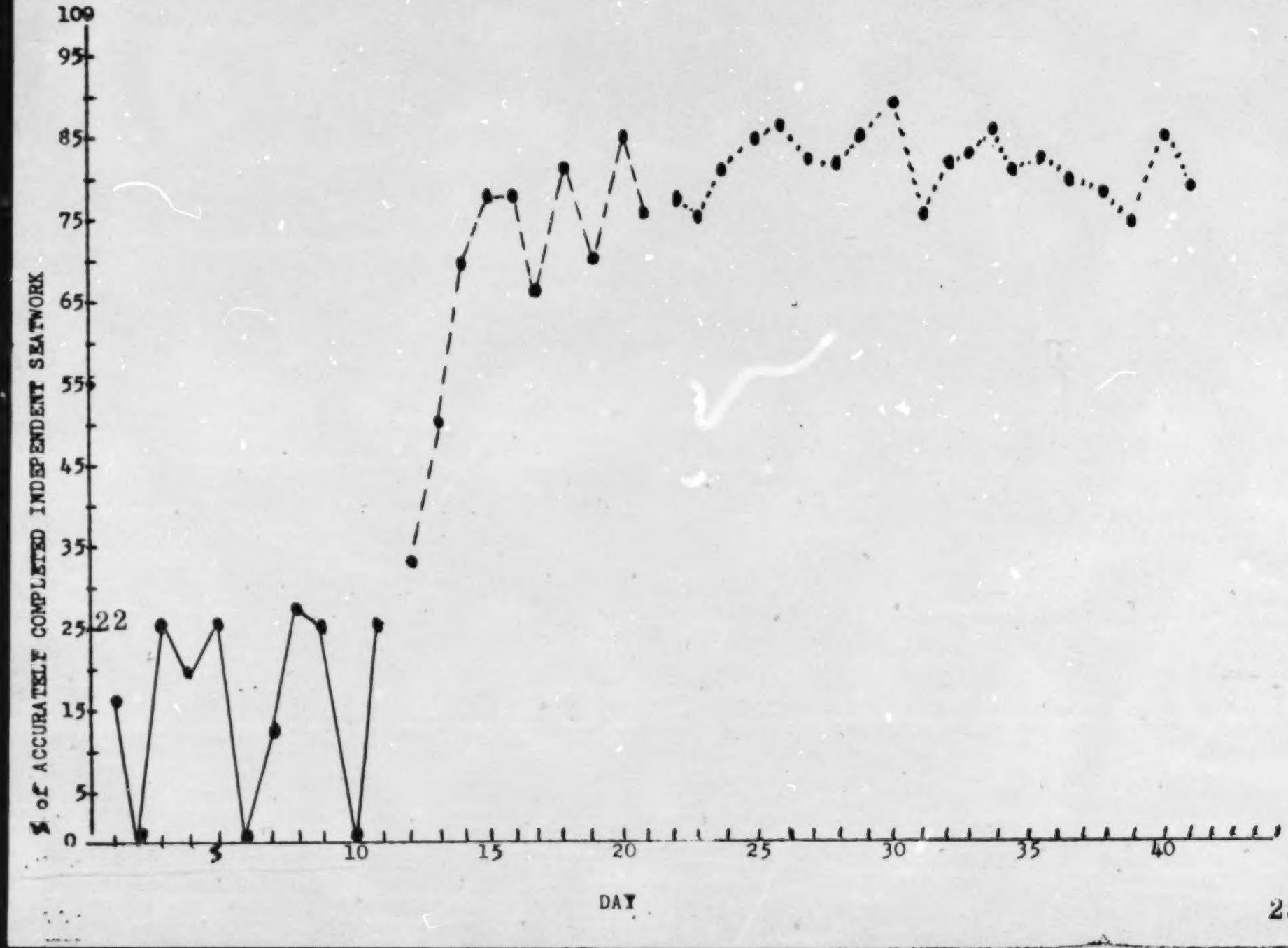


FIGURE 4 -- Multiple Baseline Comparison of the effects of teacher adminimistered praise notes on independent reading seatwork



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agard, J.A., "Mainstreaming in Texas: A descriptive analysis." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Association of Mental Deficiency, June 5, 1974.

Alexander, R.N. and Clements, J.E., "Frequency and Rate of Teacher-Parent Interaction in Public Schools". Unpublished manuscript, Georgia State University, 1975.

Bannatyne, A., "Diagnostic and Remedial Techniques for Use with Dyslexic Children". Academic Therapy Quarterly, 1968, 3, pp. 213-224.

Bijou, S. W., "What Psychology Has to Offer Education -Now." Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 1970, 3, pp. 65-71.

Brekke, B., "How Teachers Begin to Meet Needs of Mainstreamed Children in the Regular Classroom." Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 1975, 42 (Fall), pp. 49-51.

Brillinger, R., "Training Ourselves to be Helpers." Canadian Training Methods, 1974, Dec. 4, (7), 168.

Cantrell, R. P., & Cantrell, M. L. "Preventive Mainstreaming: Impact of a Supportive Services Program on Pupils." Exceptional Children, 1976, 42, (7), pp. 381-386.

Christie, L.,McKenzie, H., and Burdett, C., "The Consulting Teacher Approach to Special Education: In-service training for regular classroom teachers". Focus on Exceptional Children, 1972, 4,(5) pp. 1-12.

Christoplos, F., "Keeping Exceptional Children in Regular Classes". Exceptional Children, 1973, 39, pp.569-572.

Cohen, S.A., "Studies in Visual Perception and Reading in Disadvantaged Children", Journal of Learning Disabilities, 1969, 2, pp. 498-507.

Cormany, R.B., "Returning Special Education Students to Regular Class," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1970, XLVIII (8) pp.641-646.

Flint W., & Deloach, C., "A Parent Involvement Program Model for Handicapped Children and their Parents." Exceptional Children, 1975, 41, pp. 638-642.

Frostig, M., "Testing as a Basis for Educational Therapy." Journal of Special Education, 1967, 2, pp. 15-34.

Gearheart, B.R., & Weishahn, M. W. The Handicapped Child in the Regular Classroom. St. Louis; C.V. Mosby Co., 1976.

Glass, R. & Meckler, R., "Preparing Elementary Teachers to Instruct Mildly Handicapped Children in Regular Classrooms: A summer workshop". Exceptional Children, 1972, XXXIX (2), pp. 152-156.

Glockner, M.Z. "But How Can I Help a Handicapped Child?" Instructor, 1973, LXXXIII, (1), pp. 113-114.

Grosenick, J.K., "Assessing the Re-integration of Exceptional Children into Regular Classes." Teaching Exceptional Children, 1970, II, (3), pp. 113-119.

Hackett, R., "In Praise of Praise", American Education, 1975, 11, (2), pp. 11-15.

Hammill, D. & Bartel, N., Teaching Children with Learning and Behavior Problems, Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1975.

Haring, N.G. & Krug, D.A., "Placement in Regular Programs: Procedures and Results". Exceptional Children, 1975, pp. 413-417.

Hewett, F.M., "Handicapped Children and the Regular Classroom. From Exceptional Children in Regular Classrooms, Reynolds, M., and Davis, M. (Ed.) Minneopolis: University of Minesota, Dept of Audio-Visual Extension, 1971, pp. 100-106.

Imber, S.C., Imber, R., and Rothstein, C., "Modifying Independent Work Habits: An Effective-Affective Teacher-Parent Communication Program". Paper presented at Council of Exceptional Children, 55th Annual International Convention, Atlanta, Georgia, April, 1977.

Johnson, D. & Myklebust, H., Learning Disabilities: Educational Principles and Practices, New York: Grune & Stratton, 1967.

Kozloff, M.A., Educating Children with Learning and Behavior Problems, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974.

Leckie, D. J., "Creating a Receptive Climate in the Mainstream Program". The Volta Review, 1973 LXXV, (1), pp. 23-27.

Mann, L. "Perceptual Training Revisited: The training of nothing at all." Rehabilitation Literature, 1971, 32, pp. 322-335.

Mann, P.H. (Ed.), Mainstream Special Education - Issues and Perspectives in Urban Centers. Exceptional Children, 1975.

Masden, C. H., Becker, W.C. & Thomas, D.R., "Rules, Praise, and Ignoring Elements of Elementary Classroom Control.", Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis, 1968, 1 (2), pp.135-150.

Nelson, R.O., "An Expanded Scope for Behavior Modification in School Settings". Journal of School Psychology, 1974, 12 (4) pp. 276-287.

Nyquist, E.B. "Mainstreaming: Idea and Actuality." An Occasional Paper, State Department of Education, Albany, N.Y., 1974.

Prouty, R. & McGarry, F., The George Washington University Diagnostic-Prescriptive Teacher Program, 1970.

Reynolds, M.C., & Davis, M.D. (Ed.) "Exceptional Children in Regular Classrooms". Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Dept. of Audio-Visual Extension, 1971.

Tharp, R.G. & Wetzel, R.J., Behavior Modification in the Natural Environment., New York: Academic Press, 1969.

Wallace, G. & Kauffman, J. M., Teaching Children with Learning Problems, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1973.

Ysseldyke, J.E., and Salvia, J., "Diagnostic Prescriptive Teaching: Two Models". Exceptional Children, 1974, November, pp. 181-185.